

Van Gas

Call Roberta Larsen

Ref - 1. Interview - Mrs. Roberta Larsen 654-5415?

London Springs
First Settlement in Timpanogos Valley
1858

Early uses of the new toll road up Provo Canyon in 1858 were:

A mile-long supply train of oxen and wagons on their way to Camp Floyd in 1858. The toll exacted from them was \$1500.00. This down-canyon freight group were flabbergasted at this high price.

Another group was traveling up Provo Canyon. They were 3 men, 1 woman, 3 wagons, 6 oxen and all their belongings. They were temporary visitors to Nephi, displaced from Salt Lake City when Col. Albert Sidney Johnston's U.S. Army of 2500 men—well trained and well supplied--arrived at Echo Canyon in the fall of 1857, and threatened the Mormons..

These people must have heard of the road being built up Provo Canyon. They were willing to pay the toll and come into this pastoral valley to settle down and raise their families. These people were:

William Davidson, 38-years-old, and his 9-month pregnant wife, Ellen Nish Davidson. There were two other men, James Bailey Davis, age 31, and Robert Broadhead, age 22. Broadhead had lost his first wife in divorce. They were the very first settlers in Timpanogos Valley, at London Springs, north of Heber.

They found a large spring of water north of present Heber City. This encouraged them, and they needed shelter quickly. Mrs. Davidson was anxious, so they built a "wickiup". This was a cone-shaped structure built of poles arranged with their butts in a circle and the pole ends meeting in the center above. Then these men wove willows and branches around these poles. Then they plastered it with mud.

It was large enough to house 30 people. It had only one doorway, no windows, but a hole at the apex of the teepee-shaped domicile. That way they could build a fire on the ground, in the middle of the structure, to keep warm, and smoke would go out the top hole.

Mrs. Davidson delivered a baby girl in this hovel on 7 October 1858. In honor of the majestic mountain to the southwest, they named her Mary Timpanogos Davidson. This baby thrived and grew to adulthood and married George Henry Horn.

Because these men had English and Scottish backgrounds, they named the area "London Town", and the spring was named "London Springs."